

LEADERSHIP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF JANUARY 8, 2009

SUMMARY

Attending: Betty Anson, Ron Cohen, John Fox, Eric Borrin, Lisa Morris, Ron Garnett, Michael Moyer, Steve Clark, Jack Terrill, Lori Krueger, Maggie Pritchard, Katie Brandt, Jena Vincent, Meme Wheeler, Beverly Dubiel, Judy Buswell, Alan Robichaud.

Consultant: John Tuell

Charter Agreement

To date we have the following signatories to the agreement: Department of Health and Human Services (Commissioner and Associate Commissioner), Division of Juvenile Justice Services, Division of Children, Youth and Families, Belknap County Commissioners, Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families, Belknap County Police Chiefs Association, New Beginnings, Child and Family Services of New Hampshire, Lakes Region Partnership for Public Health, Lakes Region Community Services, and Familystrength. Additional signatories will be pursued.

Work Plan Review

Data Committee ~ Sandy and Eric gave an update of the discussion from the preceding Data Committee meeting. We are proceeding with the hypothesis statement and are asking for data relative to DCYF and DJJS involvement of Belknap County youth over the past 3 to 5 years. We need a handle on prevalence and characteristics that correlate to separate and joint jurisdiction involvement. Lori Krueger indicated school data would reveal such indicators as placements, suspension, drop-out rates and the like, although it may be difficult to pull from the state's I4SEE data system. At some point in the future, we may have to pursue institutional research board review for access to certain data. Lisa indicated that her agency's website will eventually house substance abuse data acquired through the strategic prevention frameworks project. She suggested that we think about a data clearinghouse as this project unfolds. Eric and Melissa will be in touch with Sandy and Pam to review the data reports back from the requests and discuss additional tasks including the Case Practice Review process, the Irwin Chart that Eric described as the massive data file for DJJS, and other activities needed by the Data Committee.

These queries and others will inform this initiative as to prevalence, causal factors, and other characteristics of the targeted population of youth (e.g. who are the kids, what are the reasons they get into the system, what interventions can we implement to prevent and/or interrupt the trajectory?). As we continue to peel back the layers of data, we will be able to decide whether additional, targeted research is warranted. We will want to also capture anecdotal data on who these kids are and be able to present qualitative as well as quantitative outcomes as the project moves along. We will need to consider agency agreements to access and use aggregate data. John suggested that the committee review the Guidebook (blue book) from the Child Welfare League of America as he indicated much information will flow from the initial data work.

Resource Inventory and Assessment Committee ~ Lisa Morris reported for the committee indicating that she and Jack Terrill will be serving as Co-Chairs and that they have begun to review work plan components for their group. Tasks will include process mapping and interviews with key agency representatives to get an understanding of how each system works from referral to intake, assessment and treatment (service), to discharge. Once initial interviews are conducted, a process map will be devised and sent back to the interviewee for corrections and revisions. Final process maps will be brought to the Leadership Executive Committee for presentation to the full group. At that point, we will be in a better position to understand, ask questions and make recommendations on how various system components work.

Legal & Policy Committee ~ Maggie Pritchard reported that the committee is just getting underway and that she would welcome a Co-Chair. She feels that a logical starting point is to look at mandated services and related policies and procedures as well as barriers. Maggie has begun a review of past studies performed by the NH Center for Public Policy, the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) and the like. She feels that having an attorney on the committee would be very helpful. Jim Sawyer and Kevin Smith

had both indicated an interest in serving on this committee once it began to operate so they should be contacted to see if they are still interested. County Commissioner Ed Philpot recently expressed concern over the need for family triage and asked what the current services were to perform such service. Likewise, Judge Sadler voiced similar concern. There is interest in seeing how family resource center services can be enhanced in this region. Betty suggested that outside parties be recruited to serve on this committee. Lori mentioned that Gary Westergren has a perspective on these issues and should be approached.

John suggested that we need to set up structures that move the work forward and not just have people sit on committees or convene meetings that can be convenient to miss. He applauded the work of the group thus far comparing it to where we were a few short months ago and to where other states have found themselves at this point in the systems change process. He affirmed that continuing with the process mapping activities were a key next step.

Lisa suggested it would be helpful to orientate newcomers to the initiative. Such an activity could bring everyone up to speed, including all who attended the initial symposium in June, and give them a sense of progress with an understanding of where this is headed and how it relates to other initiatives such as the System of Care grant, juvenile justice reform, etc.

John is available to participate in targeted conference calls on predetermined topics (e.g. assessment tools, process mapping, regulatory interpretations, etc.). He suggested that perhaps a call might be in order for the Legal and Policy Committee in order to set out a scope of work for the group that might include a review of state statutes governing DCFY and DJJS. He mentioned that CWLA has a legal guidebook that may help and suggested that this process might lend itself well to a paralegal internship project.

Betty indicated that now the committees are more defined, the Leadership Executive Committee need only consider meeting bi-monthly with subcommittees convening monthly. Members of the LEC who have yet to sign up for a subcommittee were asked to do so. Committee chairs will need assistance from others to distribute the workload more evenly.

Other Discussion

Jack asked whether the complexity of the system(s) was by design or by accident. John responded that it was by design (e.g. federal funds are very “siloe”; policies and eligibility criteria are designed around specific criteria that don’t allow system crossover; data systems do not jointly track the same clients yet system can’t “talk” to each other).

We need to know what information committee members want and how best to communicate that information across all committees. Ron G. indicated he felt the need for more information rather than less and Maggie expressed the need for outcome-driven data yet often not knowing what outcome measures systems use. Unfortunately outcomes are often money-driven. Lori stated the key is to figure out how we can put the policies, practices and procedures together to best help children and families.

Alan expressed an interest in qualitative data and observations of such sources as the Boys & Girls Club. If we think that we are making a difference through the type of systems change activity we are hoping to put in place, is this verified through observed behaviors in our communities? Do youth sense the change and do they respond to it through relationships, economics, and life skill changes?

John reassured the group that from his experience, this is a very frustrating point in the process. Once information begins to flow we will produce lots of results that can impact our work. He indicated the Citizens Council’s website is a good place to stay updated. Members will find minutes of meetings and other information pertaining to this and other initiatives. He relies on it as he prepares for his visits.

He indicated too that CWLA is working on establishing multi-system outcomes (collaborative intermediate and long-term outcomes across multi-systems).

Ron C, spoke of the need to reframe final outcomes not just to receive continued funding but to what differences have been made in the lives of families; not just how many were served. Can we think of

potential goals for where change can occur and where in the existing system can we make changes? John suggested some outcomes might include things like new protocols for how DCYF, DJJS, DOE and others can work together; promotion of statutory reform regarding how information can be shared; and procedures, policies and practices can be collaboratively established.

Maggie expressed concern that we may find no legislative mandates and wonders if this has ever happened anywhere else. In today's environment, we are concerned when we hear discussions about narrowing eligibility criteria as a means of reducing budgets.

Ron G. indicated that national Boys and Girls Club data show us we need to pay greater attention to risk factors unique to our communities.

Betty feels we need to get a few successes (e.g. identify why 500 families couldn't complete family support plans). How do we assess parents' ability to follow-up and complete the program? Maggie suggested uniformity in intake procedures and Alan added family triage as additional early successes at which we might aim. We all own the kid regardless of which door they come through. We need to look at the whole picture (resources, statute, procedures, policy, funding) and consider what changes are doable under current conditions and which might have more clout.

John cautioned on dealing too broadly with so many issues that we lose focus. He reminded us that we have a well defined target population and not to stray too far away until we meet our first goals.

System of Care Grant

Alan gave an update on the NH STAR system of care grant for which the State is applying to SAMHSA. Due January 15th, the application addresses the following parameters of the grant:

- 44 Belknap County youth who have severe emotional disorders
- Development of wrap-around capacity
- Comprehensive family-driven, youth-guided, community-based response
- Early identification and intervention of youth to keep them in school and family
- Integration of mental health services for refugees and immigrants
- Sustainability and expansion into Merrimack County

A meeting was held with special education representatives of area schools this past week. Lori felt the presentation was well done and the schools were supportive of the project.

Administrative Oversight Committee

The intent is that the AOC will meet not more than quarterly and would receive reports of progress on the overall initiative as well as deal with issues that present barriers to the progress of the initiative. We need to inform this group of what is happening in the trenches so that they make appropriate decisions impacting on children and families.

Next Meeting

The committee was scheduled to meet again on March 12, 2009. However, following the meeting, we learned that John Tuell is not available on that date and we would like to move it to the 19th from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon.

Please respond by e-mail to jsbuswell@bccj.org to confirm your attendance for March 19th, not March 12th. Please do so no later than January 16, 2009.